

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the title of the invention with the following title:

~~METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR TREATING HEMORRHOIDS AND~~
SIMILAR AILMENTS

Please add the following new paragraph on page 1 as the first sentence of the specification directly following the title:

This application is a divisional of United States Patent Application No. 09/781,342, filed February 12, 2001.

Please replace the paragraph that begins at page 6, line 17 and ends at page 6, line 33 with the following amended version of that paragraph:

The present invention may be useful in aiding the treatment of any number of ailments relating to swollen tissue. For example, women who have undergone an episiotomy during childbirth, could wear a panty configured, in accordance with the principles of the present invention, to include a pocket that holds a cold compress or ice pack against the swollen genital area. In addition, the pocket may include, for

example, the capacity to absorb or retain ~~an~~ any condensation formed as the cold object warms, thereby preventing the wearer's clothing from getting wet. Alternatively, the same woman might wear a differently configured panty if, for example, she also suffered from hemorrhoids as a result of childbirth. In that instance, the panty may also include one or more panels to separate the buttocks to ease the healing process of the hemorrhoids.

Please replace the paragraph that begins at page 7, line 1 and ends at page 7, line 12 with the following amended version of that paragraph:

The present invention may also include a wearable device that is specifically configured to provide relief for hemorrhoid discomfort during sleep. This device, as well as other embodiments of the present invention, ~~provided~~ provides relief from discomfort and irritation by reducing friction between the affected area and other body parts. For the treatment of hemorrhoids in particular, the present invention also provides relief by separating the buttocks, thereby removing unnecessary pressure on the hemorrhoids. There is

also provided relief ~~due to~~ from discomfort resulting from an episiotomy.

Please replace the paragraph that begins at page 10, line 20 and ends at page 10, line 31 with the following amended version of that paragraph:

As shown in FIG 1., front portion 16 may include one or more attachment mechanisms 17, that may be used to make it easier for a user to put on and take off garment 10. For example, attachment mechanisms 17 may be buttons, snaps, a zipper, ~~velcro~~ VELCRO, the fastening hook and loop material, or any other conventional means for attachment. This provides for front panel 16 to open in two flaps 19 and 21. It should be noted that belt portion 13 would also separate in such configurations. Such a configuration may be easier for a user to put on and take off due to elastic belt portions 18 and 20 (which act to separate the swollen tissue from non-swollen tissue).

Please replace the paragraph that begins at page 11, line 30 and ends at page 12, line 13 with the following amended version of that paragraph:

Belt portions 18 and 20 are substantially parallel belts that perform the separation of affected tissue from non-swollen tissue in accordance with the present invention. Belt portions 18 and 20 are panels formed from an elastic or semi-elastic material, which may be adjustable in order to fit different shaped users within a given size. Belt portions 18 and 20 may also include frictional members (not shown), such as small rubber knobs that further enhance the separation action of the belts. Additionally, belt portions 18 and 20 may be adjustable to vary the tension with which the body portions are pulled. The adjustability of belt portions 18 and 20 may be varied by adjusting, for example, a belt buckle, a latch, a slide (which is secured on one end and slides up or down the belt to loosen or tighten the belt), or other suitable adjusting material, such as ~~velcro~~ VELCRO, the fastening hook and loop material.

Please replace the paragraph that begins at page 12, line 14 and ends at page 12, line 29 with the following amended version of that paragraph:

Belt portions 18 and 20 may also be made from a highly flexible fabric that automatically adjusts itself for

each person and does not require further adjustments. As belt portions 18 and 20 are adjusted more tightly, the buttocks cheeks further separate thereby allowing for instant relief due to from hemorrhoid discomfort. Similarly, belt portions 18 and 20 may be located in a different and/or lower position, and garment 10 may include leg portions (not shown), in an effort to pull non-swollen tissue and clothing away from the genital area for women who have recently had an episiotomy. Alternately, belt portions 18 and 20 may be formed of a single piece of material which, for the treatment of hemorrhoids, would stretch from the rear of one side, across the front (behind front panel 16) to the rear of the other side.